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ABSTRACT

This "feature issue" reports on major shifts in attitudes, practices, and policies that have led to the growth of supported employment programs for people with disabilities, with special focus on the situation in Minnesota. It contains the following articles: "To the Year 2000 and Beyond: Jobs Won't Be the Problem" (David R. Johnson); "The End of Supported Employment?" (William Niederloh); "Opening the Doors for Youth in Transition" (Stephanie Corbey); "Creating Jobs through Economic Development" (Dale Verstegen); "Supported Employment in Rural Areas" (Michal Jorgens); "Charlie and Kimberly: Supported Employment at Work"; "Questions and Answers about Supported Employment Programming for Individuals with Severe Handicaps" (Paul Wehman and Katherine J. Inge); "The Employment Network Technical Assistance Project" (Jay Buckley); "The Challenges of Conversion" (Don Lavin); "Ten Keys to Conversion Success" (Jackie Mlynarczyk); "Annette, Dawn and Judy: Employment Specialist Closeups"; "Social Interactions in the Workplace" (Janis Chadsey-Rusch); and "Supported Employment and the Federal Government" (Terrence R. Dolan). Descriptions of several Minnesota programs and a list of seven printed resources are also included. (JDD)

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INSTITUTE ON COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

IMPACT

Feature Issue on Supported Employment

Volume 2(1) Spring, 1989

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A glance back, a look ahead...

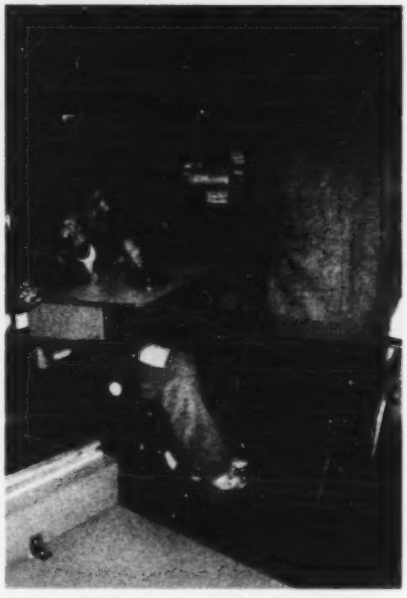
Supported Employment: Where the Road Has Led Us

During the short history of this country, we've come far in providing opportunities for persons with disabilities to be productive members of local communities and larger society. Our progress has been marked by major shifts in attitudes, practices, and policies. While there remains a long distance to cover until all persons with disabilities have opportunities to participate in community life in ways that they find personally meaningful and challenging, by glancing back over the road already traveled we can perhaps appreciate the distance we've come.

In the early years of America, the families of persons with disabilities usually bore the entire responsibility of caring for their welfare. Often, in the predominantly rural culture, tasks could be found in the home or on the farm for the persons with disabilities to perform, with supervision provided by family members.

Acting out of an unfortunate intolerance toward those perceived as unable to live and work independently, the nation next embraced the widespread custodial care of people with disabilities. There was little faith in the capacity of such individuals to be productive, participating members of society; therefore, they were placed in large institutions.

In the 1950's and 1960's, day activity centers and sheltered workshops flourished in response to efforts of parents denied services for their children with disabilities, and also as part of a movement to return citizens with disabilities to smaller community-based residential settings. Many of these programs emphasized academic exercises, self-help skills, simulated work activities and a developmental model of learning. Though individuals were theoretically expected to move through various stages of development to ultimately reach competitive employment, in reality such movement was slow or entirely non-existent. Sheltered workshops, while offering a paid work experience, promoted segregated work settings with little chance for social integration.



Charlie Davies works five days a week on a production job through a supported employment program. See story on p 6.

Early in this decade, supported employment emerged as a priority in federal human service agencies. Supported employment includes: paid work for persons with disabilities for whom competitive employment is unlikely and for whom ongoing support is needed to maintain employment; work conducted in a variety of settings, particularly where persons without handicaps are employed; and work supported by any activity necessary to sustain it, including training and transportation. Today, experience with this strategy is revealing that consumers of this service can achieve levels of community integration and independence once thought impossible.

The history of supported employment is a story far from finished. Just as the road we now travel is built on earlier paths, so our future direction will lead on from where we are now. Regardless of the changes yet to come, we continue to be guided by the same belief that motivated those early families to provide work for their children, the belief that work is an essential part of life that must be available to all.

-The Editors

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A report from the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota. Dedicated to improving community services and social support for persons with developmental disabilities and their families.

To The Year 2000 And Beyond: Jobs Won't Be The Problem

by David R. Johnson

From the shopping malls to corporate computer centers, from fast food establishments to high tech industrial plants, a common plea is cropping up all across the U.S.: 'HELP WANTED, APPLY WITHIN'.

...George Russell, columnist, Newsweek, 1985.

On June 10, 1986, the National Alliance of Business hosted a national leadership meeting, Youth: 2000, sponsored by the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services, with the participation of the Department of Education. The purpose of the meeting was to focus on complex and challenging economic, social, and educational issues facing today's youth and young adults. When William E. Brock, former secretary of labor, addressed the meeting, he said, "Unless the economy stagnates, there will be a job for every qualified person who wants one. . . the question is, are we going to have the people to fill them, with the kinds of skills that are requisite to those jobs." The statement that Secretary Brock offered is a telling one for all our nation's youth and adults. What he is alluding to is that the U.S. economy is systematically being restructured, with a shift from manufacturing and agricultural labor to rapidly expanding service, information processing, and telecommunications industries. This suggests that many more new jobs will become available in the future. The major boom, however, will be in jobs related to information processing. For example, even though 50 percent of all jobs in America are already related to information processing, that figure is expected to rise to 70 percent by the year 2000 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1987).

A second point in Secretary Brock's statement was that from now to the year 2000, demography will be on the side of people who want jobs. For the first time in 20 years, the number of people entering the labor force will soon begin to decline. The youngest of the "baby boomers," those persons born between 1945 and 1964, will turn 25 in 1989. Thereafter, the number of new entrants will continue to decrease for the foreseeable future. The largest single influence on the labor force during the past two decades has been industry's reliance on young workers. During the 1970s, youth 16 to 24 years old inundated the job market and the number of new young workers rose by 42%. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported that in 1980, 14.7% of working age persons were between 20 and 24 years old; in 1985 that group was only 13.8% of the working population. By 1995 this group will have decreased to 11.6%, a loss of more than 3 million workers.

The industries most affected by the dramatic changes expected in the labor force will be those that will experience rapid growth during the next 10 years and beyond. Employment opportunities are expected to increase about 15% through 1995. The Bureau of Labor Statistics expects almost no growth in most goods producing industries. However, the service industries will add 2.5 million new jobs by the year 2000. Two key factors become apparent when the emerging supply of new workers is analyzed: They will be substantially fewer in number, and many employers will need to rely increasingly on a "diversified work force" consisting of increased numbers of minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and previously retired persons.

Simply put, jobs won't be the problem in the foreseeable future. There are still, however, several critical issues that must be addressed by job developers and service providers in order to capitalize on present and future changes in the business economy and demographic conditions. First, job developers will need to familiarize themselves with current labor trends and conditions, as well as with employer needs for present and future labor resources. Further, productive partnerships with business and industry will need to occur. The mere fact that labor market trends indicate that the employment outlook for persons with disabilities may be brighter in the future does not necessarily mean that employers will automatically perceive these individuals as the most desirable candidates for present and future positions. Owen B. Butler, retired chairperson of the Board of Proctor and Gamble, in addressing the Youth: 2000 leadership conference, commented that "a reduction in the supply of labor will not do much to solve unemployment problems . . . in fact, in a free market society, the number of jobs created will be equal to the number of productively employable people who are available in the labor force . . . the unemployed consist primarily of people in transition between jobs, and people who are unemployable" (National Alliance of Business, 1986). Stereotyped images of persons with disabilities as being potentially unemployable and unproductive should be corrected. It is unlikely that employers will be rushing to our doorsteps in search of qualified workers with disabilities until this occurs.

The future holds many new employment opportunities for people with disabilities. There are still some caveats in our approaches and service delivery practices, and many barriers to overcome in the labor market itself. But the odds-makers give us a better edge on the future than ever before in making employment a real option for persons with disabilities in our society.

David R. Johnson is Associate Director for Exemplary Services with the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

The End of Supported Employment?

by William Niederloh

If we do our jobs right in the next few years, I believe supported employment will have quite a different look in the year 2000 than it does currently. In fact, I would anticipate that "supported employment" as a discreet and narrowly defined program entity will have largely disappeared. What we will have is a system that makes available a range of integrated employment opportunities for persons without regard to the issue of type or severity of disability. Those employment options will represent a broad range of occupational choices including jobs in the professional/technical fields. Support service needs will be flexibly applied so that the necessary supports are available when and where needed, and only in the amount needed. Transition to the natural supervision of the job site would be encouraged and experienced by many employees.

It strikes me that we are in a unique position here in Minnesota to shape that future work environment. If we are to be successful in creating this future, there are a number of things that need to occur:

• The primary focus of planning and developmental activity must shift from the state to the local community level. State involvement will need to be in place to both encourage and support those community efforts.

• We need to develop a strong consensus for supported employment in all of its many variations among the large group of stakeholders including consumers, service providers, state and local public agencies, as well as legislators.

• We need to put in place a training system that will supply the ever expanding staff resource needs of the supported employment system.

• We need to develop a funding structure that provides equitable resources in support of consumer program goals and is not limited by choice of a particular provider of support services.

A review of this short list leads me to the conclusion that we can say with some confidence that significant progress is being made in each of these areas with the notable exception of a comprehensive funding structure. This may well be the most significant barrier to accomplishing my vision for the year 2000.

William Niederloh is Assistant Commissioner, Division of Rehabilitation Services, Minnesota Department of Jobs and Training, St. Paul.

Opening The Doors For Youth In Transition

by Stephanie Corbey

In the movement from school to work and adult life, increased options and creative planning are integral to success. The vision of a successful transition includes individuals with all types of disabilities functioning to their greatest potential in all facets of community life and in settings where all individuals are accepted with their diverse skills and abilities. The doors are NOW ajar! We cannot wait for this type of society to exist, but instead need to create it. It is time for society to support the work efforts and desires of individuals with disabilities who have in the past been limited in their work activity. Supported employment is one way to do this!

Supported employment is an option for individuals who previously would have been placed in segregated settings where the only opportunity to socialize would be with other individuals with disabilities. The promise that supported employment holds is an opportunity for individuals to be part of the community, to interact with individuals without handicaps who are not paid care givers.

The work activities through supported employment by design allow one to contribute one's skills in the work place. There is a place for all people in the labor market. The work needs to be designed to utilize an individual's assets and allow that person to reach beyond all expectations. Continued support by job developers, job coaches/trainers, willing employers and rehabilitation engineers is needed.

Much of what happens during the transition planning years (age 14-21), while the individual is still in public education, needs to focus on community-based instruction, part of which is vocational. Vocational exploration, training and employment provide data to use in the transition to adult services. Supported employment during secondary school allows individuals who cannot work on their own to be involved in community-based employment and to experience the work world.

State legislation for transition (M.S. 120.17 Subp. 3a) describes transition planning as starting at age 14 or the 9th grade, allowing time for identification of needs and early planning. At that stage, goals and objectives on the IEP need to reflect the anticipated future environments that an individual will be involved in. Instruction and

Corbey, continued on p 4

Creating Jobs Through Economic Development

by Dale Verstegen

Sigmund Freud once said, "Loving and working are the two moving impulses of man." He also said, "His work at least gives him a secure place in a portion of reality, in the human community." Even though his terminology is sexist, he makes a strong point about the value of a job in a person's life. Two problems that we have to address in providing community-based vocational services for persons with severe disabilities are the numbers of jobs available (particularly in rural areas) and the limited type of jobs available.

One strategy that has been used to address these problems in Wisconsin over the last three years is economic development. This strategy assists rehabilitation facilities, other not-for-profit service providers, and people with disabilities in starting or expanding business ventures that utilize an integrated work force. One rehabilitation facility purchased an industrial mop manufacturing company because the community didn't offer manufacturing-oriented job opportunities for their clients. Another facility purchased a Merry Maids franchise because they had difficulty finding on-going employment opportunities for their housekeeping and janitorial program. A third facility developed an electric pole motor manufacturing operation; they were going completely into community-based services and felt they could produce a better finished product than the companies for whom they did sub-assembly. And a fourth facility developed a temporary employment agency as a means to expand their community-based services and create a wider variety of employment opportunities leading to permanent employment for their clients. In all of these examples, integrated work forces were utilized to provide integration for clients, provide additional jobs for the community and, most importantly, to compete profitably in the marketplace.

From my perspective as a business development consultant who assisted these organizations and many others both in urban and rural areas, I am confident that the job creation potential of service providers who develop business ventures is unlimited. The projects that are the most successful are the ones where the marketing, operational, and administrative strengths of the organizations are closely matched to the need for a specific type of product or service in the marketplace. In order for that match to be demonstrated to the board of directors, staff, and financial institutions, a feasibility study and business plan are required. There are a wide range of resources available to assist in this planning process. In addition, if a business venture is to be developed by a rehabilitation facility, it is very important that the reasons for its development are closely tied to the mission of the not-for-profit organization. If the board of directors, staff and the community do not understand the necessity and potential outcomes of this business venture, there won't be the support and commitment necessary for it to be successful.

...the job creation potential of service providers who develop business ventures is unlimited.

If the plan is sound, with a high degree of commitment and support for the project, then this type of business venture will succeed. It will generate additional revenue to carry on the mission of the rehabilitation facility, and it will enable persons with severe disabilities to have "a secure place in a portion of reality, in the human community".

Dale Verstegen is a Business Development Consultant, Wisconsin Department of Development, Madison.

Corby, continued from p 3

training support the goals and objectives by implementation of functional community-based curriculum.

According to the Minnesota Department of Education child count, the number of special education graduates has been growing steadily over the past decade. Conservative estimates predict over 6000 special education students will graduate annually in upcoming years, with 10% of them needing community-based employment services. Public funds are needed to provide support and training for this initiative.

Supported employment needs to continue as an option for the successful transition of youth with disabilities. Ongoing efforts to coordinate and support activities that assist in the collaboration of agencies will lead to removal of barriers for individuals with disabilities.

Stephanie Corbey is Transition Specialist for the Interagency Office on Transition Services, Unique Learner Needs Section, of the Minnesota Department of Education, St. Paul.

"Without the ability to temporarily forget what we know, our minds remain cluttered up with ready-made answers, and we never have an opportunity to ask questions that lead off the path in new directions."

- from A Whack on the Side of the Head: How to Unlock Your Mind for Innovation by Roger Von Oech.

Supported Employment In Rural Areas

by Michal Jorgens

Can supported employment work in rural areas? If the experiences of some small rural communities in northwestern Minnesota are anything by which to judge, the answer is a definite *YES*. A successful supported employment program in a rural community shares the same broad philosophical approach and basic components as supported employment anywhere: Training and ongoing support by a job coach, the provider's faith in the abilities of the workers, and a commitment by all involved to make it work. However, based on my experience in Polk County, a rural county in northwestern Minnesota, I believe there are some unique issues that small and rural communities must address in order to successfully provide supported employment services. These issues emanate from the economic, geographic, and social factors that affect such communities.

One of the most distressing problems facing providers is the depressed rural economy in non-metropolitan areas. Unemployment statistics for November in Region I, which covers the northwestern corner of Minnesota, show from 6% to 12% unemployment, significantly higher than state or national figures. As a result, there are fewer jobs available, more competition for each job, and the average wage is low (most being minimum wage). There are few labor unions. The 1988 Minnesota Economic Report to the Governor shows only 6% of the jobs in northwestern Minnesota to be manufacturing. About 19% are agricultural, and the rest are government and service jobs.

One of the most distressing problems facing providers is the depressed rural economy...

Consequently, in my experience, most supported employment placements are service jobs. Janitorial, motel housekeeping, and food service are the most common jobs obtained by job developers at the Polk County Developmental Achievement Center. An additional problem encountered by job developers in the communities we serve is that many businesses are family enterprises with little profit-margin. Even though there may be work available at these places, the operators will be more likely to put in extra hours themselves than to make an employment commitment to one of our workers, unless it is short-term. Under these circumstances, a successful job developer combines creativity with negotiating skills to identify job opportunities for workers and to sell their skills to employers. The job developer often works with the business to tailor a position that meets the employer's needs and provides a job to a disabled person. Even so, the work-hours per week for each job are usually well under 20 hours.

Another factor in rural areas is geography. Polk County DAC serves 50 adults who are transported from several communities to a central location (Crookston) that is up to 40 miles away from their homes. This leaves two options for job searching and placement. The first option, to place people in their home communities, is rendered almost impossible due to transportation issues. Public transportation is virtually nonexistent and driving back and forth with staff and/or workers would be cost-ineffective (the cost would likely be greater than the worker's earnings). The alternative, placing people in jobs in one central community, also has its draw-backs. Often, as in Crookston, this community is the location of several human service agencies: the DAC, the Mental Health Center, a Division of Rehabilitation Services branch, a Community Action Program agency, an area rehabilitation facility and the public school system are all located in Crookston and compete for limited jobs for the various youth, disabled, and elderly populations that they serve. Elderly people comprise the majority of the population, and often are looking for limited, part-time work. Dealing with this situation requires cooperation between providers. In Crookston, representatives of these agencies have met and begun some cooperative efforts.

...the famous neighborliness of small communities is a definite asset.

A third factor that differentiates rural areas is the social fabric of communities. This particularly affects job development. In small communities, most people know one another to some degree. In this setting, a sophisticated marketing effort for supported employment services probably will not increase the visibility of the program. Personal connections and credibility of agency staff are often the primary sources of work opportunities for supported workers. Local media provide excellent public education resources. In Crookston, radio stations and the newspapers have covered events and written articles every time an issue has been brought to the attention of a reporter. Finally, the famous neighborliness of small communities is a definite asset. In Crookston, the community spirit of neighbor helping neighbor contributes to the business/provider partnership, creating job opportunities and integrating people into communities.

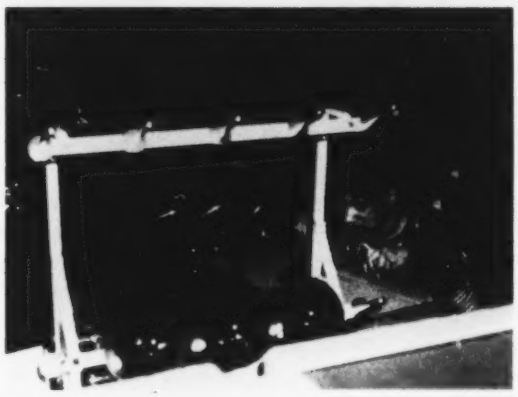
Clearly these are some issues that create special challenges for supported employment providers in rural areas. In many ways, they are the same issues that non-disabled people face when seeking employment in these areas. Persistence, creativity, and cooperative efforts are the keys to successfully achieving maximum employment for the people we serve.

Michal Jorgens is Director of the Polk County Developmental Achievement Center in Crookston, Minnesota.

Charlie and Kimberly: Supported Employment At Work

The employment of Charlie Davies and Kimberly Weiderholt is an example of how supported employment can be accomplished for people, and how much people can accomplish because of it.

Charlie and Kimberly are service recipients of Dakota Incorporated, a developmental achievement center located in Crystal, Minnesota, near Minneapolis. In 1987, both were chosen to participate in a research and evaluation project funded through a grant from the Minnesota Supported Employment Project and coordinated by the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota. The purpose of the project was to identify persons within Minnesota having very severe disabilities who would benefit from highly specialized technical assistance and other forms of intervention in attaining employment. Through the collaborative efforts of professionals from these agencies and programs, Charlie and Kim are currently employed at a service-oriented company in the Twin Cities area.



Charlie is a twenty-four year old man whose primary disability has been diagnosed as cerebral palsy with additional conditions of epilepsy and visual impairment. Every weekday morning at 8:30 he arrives at the worksite and goes directly into production. His job involves the insertion of metal grommets into policy documents necessary for later use by the company. With the help of an electronic switch, Charlie controls a machine that automatically loads the metal binders and forces them through the large stacks. His job coach, an employee of Dakota Incorporated, assists him by aligning the documents in the machine and giving him a verbal cue to start the process. Charlie is capable of producing up to 500 units in the morning. As his job coach observes, "This is a really great environment for him to work in".

Later in the morning one might find Charlie in the recreation room for a break with his job coach. After break he returns to the work area and continues his job until lunch. At about 11:00 Charlie goes to the cafeteria where he occasionally purchases his own meal and jokes around with the cafeteria workers. After lunch, he returns to the main Dakota center where he receives physical therapy before returning home.

The future holds further opportunities for Charlie. Additional automated devices, such as a sliding tray and a self-indication light to cue his response to operate the machine, are being considered as ways for him to increase his independence on the job. His social opportunities also continue to expand. "The non-handicapped coworkers here are very supportive," Charlie's job coach states. "They invite us for snacks and other social gatherings that the other workers are invited to. They show genuine interest in what is going on here."

No sooner does Charlie leave the worksite than Kimberly arrives, after completing a morning of physical therapy and other skills training at the Dakota center.

Kim, a 25-year-old woman whose disabilities have been identified as cerebral palsy and severe mental retardation, has been employed at the worksite for six months, and her job involves many of the same tasks as Charlie is expected to perform. The automated switch that she uses has helped her immensely in completing the steps necessary for the job. Before the use of the switch, she required a great deal of prompting by the job coach. Now, he states, "Kim seems more responsive to what she is doing since the electronic switch has been introduced to her. She makes an independent choice on her work and how to go about it." She stays in production at the work station until 2:00 daily, then heads for home at a local group home for adults with disabilities.

Although Charlie and Kimberly have received much assistance in securing and maintaining their community employment from Dakota Incorporated, the Division of Rehabilitation Services, and the Institute on Community Integration, it remains apparent that their persistent efforts to work productively are the primary reasons why such programs can be so successful. The benefits derived from their employment, both by their employer and themselves, illustrate the positive impact of supported employment on the quality of life for persons with severe disabilities.

Questions and Answers About Supported Employment Programming For Individuals With Severe Handicaps

by Paul Wehman and Katherine J. Inge

What is the best supported employment model for persons with severe handicaps?

For most persons with severe handicaps, initially try the individual placement model either in competitive employment or in supported jobs that would provide an individual placement but at a subminimum wage level. If the individual model does not succeed after several types of jobs, then initiate group placements such as work crews or enclaves.

How can an employment specialist convince employers that individuals who are severely handicapped can be competitively employed?

Concentrate on the strengths and capabilities of the consumers. Describe these in concrete terms related to specific positions and job responsibilities. For example, the most important issues from the employer's viewpoint are the ability of the worker to stay on task, work at a productive level with accuracy, and be dependable. Stress the job-matching process and re-state the role of the trainer.

Provide examples of how the employment specialist might help the consumer overcome any limitations. For example, an individual who does not communicate verbally can be assisted through picture cueing devices, through gestures, and through coworkers and supervisors who have been trained to communicate with the person. If the job trainer is convinced that a consumer can make it on a particular job, then he or she can usually convince the employer.

What critical components should an employment specialist look for when selecting a job for someone with severe handicaps?

Look for support or supervision that is consistently available. Choose an environment that provides opportunities for naturally occurring reinforcement. Determine whether the position has a consistent work routine with minimal task changes. Ideally, rapid turnover, entry level service positions with minimal task changes, high supervision, and consistent reinforcement should be prioritized. Jobs that are isolated and provide little supervisor/coworker interaction are very difficult for individuals with severe handicaps to maintain.

Can individuals with behavior management problems participate in supported employment programs?

Yes! Persons with significant behavior problems can work with support. The nature of the behavior problems and the frequency and intensity of those problems will dictate the type of job and environment. For example, head weaving and occasional shrieking will be more acceptable in a loud kitchen than in a small, quiet gourmet restaurant.

Remember, it is the responsibility of a good employment specialist to provide behavior management programming as part of job-site training. In some instances, behavior problems do not occur when the person is integrated into a normal environment. Therefore, it is important not to exclude individuals with behavior management problems from participating in supported employment programs.

What are the major problems in placing and retaining individuals with severe handicaps in supported employment?

Finding a job that best fits the abilities and limitations of the person can be a major problem. Because many persons with severe handicaps have more limitations, finding the right job usually takes longer. In most cases, a job will have to be found for a particular person rather than finding a job for which several people may be appropriate. In

Wehman, continued on p 14

The Employment Network Technical Assistance Project

by Jay Buckley

The Employment Network at the University of Oregon was established in 1985 to arrange and provide technical assistance for systems change to supported employment. The project, funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) and the Rehabilitation Services Administration, is focused on four systems change areas. These are state (and state supported employment project) efforts to:

- Help generate opportunities for persons with severe disabilities.
- Develop local service providers.
- Establish and revise state policy and implementation systems.
- Build consensus and participation among consumers, advocates, employers, providers and the public.

Individual state technical assistance is organized around each state's assessment of its needs in relation to these goals. The Employment Network works with each state's systems change efforts by:

- Guiding states in a self-assessment of state level progress and needs.
- Developing a plan for providing or conducting technical assistance based on the self-assessment.
- Arranging or providing consulting trips to states by national experts.
- Convening semi-annual state supported employment project meetings.
- Developing and distributing materials on implementation of supported employment.

The Employment Network also sponsors 35 training institutes per year around the nation on a number of topics in supported employment. For additional information about The Employment Network, contact David Mank, Jay Buckley or Andrea Cioffi, 135 College of Education, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon 97403.

The Challenges of Conversion

by Don Lavin

Although tremendous strides have been made in recent years, a spirited debate continues about the future of habilitation/rehabilitation program services. There are many critical questions service providers must address to achieve a measurable degree of conversion success. Among these are the following:

- What types of jobs will people with severe disabilities be able to do in the community? Can they learn the skills that are needed to perform the jobs satisfactorily? How can agencies monitor and maintain acceptable behavior in the workplace?

- How will these services impact upon the agency's administrative and staffing support pattern? How will the agencies manage the adjustment to a "decentralized" service environment?

- What will conversion cost? Who will pay for it?

Unfortunately, I cannot offer any standard answers to these questions facing administrators of habilitation and rehabilitation agencies. Although a number of national and state trends are beginning to emerge, the answers to many of these issues can only be effectively addressed within a given service community by a coalition of its major stakeholders. I believe it is important to mobilize the collective efforts of policymakers, business leaders, government agencies, service providers, educators, human service professionals, parents, consumers, and the general public within a broader "community blueprint" that encourages integrated employment options. In working together towards a common goal, we can maximize the resources available to us and tackle many of the barriers that inhibit conversion.

Like many states, Minnesota's service system for persons with disabilities is in a state of transition. Faced with these new challenges, I believe many service providers will be persuaded to re-examine their agency purpose and service delivery formats. The growing evidence would suggest that many of them will need to re-adjust their organizational focus in response to changing consumer demands for fuller integration and participation in community life.

Of course, Minnesota's rehabilitation facilities and DACs cannot be expected to meet the challenges of conversion alone. Any real measure of systems changes will require leadership and mandates from federal and state agencies that regulate the delivery of habilitation and rehabilitation services. For this reason, it is important for agency administrators to work closely with policymakers who are in a position to influence the conversion of existing service systems and a meaningful expansion of community-based employment alternatives.

Don Lavin is Program Manager at Rise, Inc., in Spring Lake Park, Minnesota.

Ten Keys to Conversion Success

by Jackie Mlynarczyk

How can rehabilitation facilities and day programs successfully overcome the challenges of conversion? One agency's experience has taught its director these lessons.

1. Develop a shared mission and vision for your organization and a firm commitment by staff and board members to stand behind it. I believe the basic philosophy of an organization has far more to do with its achievements than do technological or economic resources. All decisions -- programmatic, fiscal and personnel -- reflect its values and culture.

2. Set your goals and allocate whatever resources are available to implementing the priorities.

3. Do not be afraid to act. I have learned that it is okay to make mistakes. At least something new has been tried and learned in the process.

4. It is also okay not to meet all of your conversion goals. Do the best you can with the resources available to you.

5. Be persistent and proactive. Any change requires a commitment of energy to cope with indifference and resistance.

6. Get into the habit of asking, "How can we make this happen?" Brainstorm among staff and other community agencies and be willing to take practical risks.

7. Let those who implement the conversion help plan it.

8. Train and support your employees. Be open to their concerns and willing to be flexible whenever possible.

9. Identify and stay close to your customers. In our case, it is the consumer, employer, and funding source. We can learn a lot from them.

10. Keep your sense of humor handy . . . you will need it.

Jackie Mlynarczyk is Executive Director of Kaposia, Inc. in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Annette, Dawn and Judy: Employment Specialist Closeups

Name: Annette Paradise Allen
Job Title: Program Assistant/Work Trainer, Northeast Intermediate School District #916
Years With Agency: 1.5 years
Previous Profession: Pre-school Teacher
Biggest Challenge: Addressing challenging behaviors that occur in the community when there are no other staff around.
Biggest Reward: Knowing that the students are enjoying themselves and learning at the same time.
Unexpected Surprise: A student lay on the floor in a restaurant and refused to get up. The behavior surprised me, but so did the response from the public. People thought that he was tired or maybe sick; they did not see it as inappropriate behavior.
Funniest Story: Some high school kids were picking on a woman from our school who was washing cafeteria tables at a different high school. Finally, she simply "wacked" one of them over the head with a sponge. Other employees without disabilities, who had had enough of these troublemakers, applauded her action.
Hopes for the Future: I hope that planning can occur for these students that will ease the transition process from school to community life. I hope that they will be able to remain in the jobs they obtained while in school.

Name: Dawn Bonacci
Job Title: Job Trainer/Job Coach, CWDC Industries, Inc.
Years With Agency: 8 years
Previous Profession: Coordinator of an independent living skills program.
Biggest Challenge: Matching a specific client, with his/her unique set of strengths and weaknesses, to a particular job and specific expectations for that job.
Biggest Reward: There are many, but the most important is observing the feelings of pride and self-worth of the clients when they are employed in a community-based job.
Unexpected Surprise: None
Funniest Story: This summer workers from the chore service mobile crew were mowing the lawn of an elderly woman when one of the workers mowed down a half dozen of the customer's tomato plants. After the appropriate apologies were made, the woman was reimbursed with a bushel of beautiful tomatoes.
Hopes for the Future: It would be interesting to develop an international foreign exchange of persons with disabilities and set up a program in which a client could travel to another country and be hired and trained to work in a foreign job.

Name: Judy Wandling
Job Title: Community Employment Coordinator, Houston County DAC
Years With Agency: 2.5 years
Previous Profession: Living Skills Specialist/Activities Manager
Biggest Challenge: Getting employers to not expect more from the clients they hire than they expect from their other employees.
Biggest Reward: Seeing individuals take pride in their jobs, strive to be successful, and interact with co-workers on the job and off.
Unexpected Surprise: I went to coach an individual and as it turned out he "coached" me on how to properly fold clothing and linen. His methods were neater and quicker than mine.
Funniest Story: That same individual returned to work one Monday morning only to receive criticism from one of his supervisors about his quality of work on the previous Thursday and Friday. Being his assigned coach, I also received a phone call notifying me of several oversights and mistakes that had been made in the laundry department. As I referred to my calendar to put things into perspective, I noticed that he had been on vacation those two days and could not have been responsible.
Hopes for the Future: I hope to see continued vocational growth, independence and community-based employment for individuals.

Social Interactions in the Workplace

by Janis Chadsey-Rusch

Most work environments are also very social environments. Interactions between employees have been related to job satisfaction, friendship formation, support, reduced stress, and quality work performance. As individuals with mental retardation begin to work in integrated employment settings, it becomes important to study social interactions that exist in work settings. This information is important because: (a) it may inform us about how to help employees with mental retardation keep their jobs since research has indicated that these workers frequently are fired because of inappropriate social interactions, and (b) it may provide us with information on ways to enhance the integration between workers with and without handicaps and, thereby, improve the quality of working life.

In spite of the importance of social interactions in job settings, there is little information on this topic, especially research in real-work settings. Recently, several studies have been conducted that are beginning to describe the types of social interactions that exist in employment settings. In one study, researchers directly observed the social interactions displayed by a group of workers with and without mental retardation at several employment sites. The data were analyzed to determine: (a) the participants involved in the interactions, (b) the primary activity or time period associated with the interaction, and (c) whether the interactions involved a social or work-related topic.

...co-workers interacted more often with workers without mental retardation.

The results from these observations indicated that interaction patterns varied according to the people involved in the interaction and also varied by the types of activity engaged in by the workers. For example, the target employees' co-workers displayed more interactions than their supervisors. During lunch, workers were more likely to talk about nontask subjects such as sports, the weather, or current events. When working, however, employees were more likely to talk about work-related topics, such as tasks that needed to be completed or changes in the ongoing work routine. When employees arrived to work, they were just as likely to talk about nonwork topics as they were to talk about work topics.

The other major finding from these observations was that there were differences in the interaction patterns between workers with and without mental retardation. For example, supervisors were just as likely to interact with either workers with or without mental retardation. Co-workers' interactions, however, varied by worker. Overall, co-workers interacted more often with workers without mental retardation. In addition, they engaged in significantly fewer nontask interactions with the workers with mental retardation throughout the work day.

Similar findings were reported in another recent study. After directly observing the interactions of workers with and without disabilities in a private nonprofit business, the researchers also found that employees with disabilities were more likely to interact with other employees with disabilities, and employees without disabilities interacted more frequently with their same counterparts.

...although workers with mental retardation are physically integrated in work settings, they do not appear to be socially integrated...

Recently, two studies were conducted where co-workers with disabilities were asked about their interactions with workers with mental retardation. One reported that while co-workers without disabilities were 72% as likely to have daily contact with workers with mental retardation, 46% reported they had never taken a lunch or a break with a worker with mental retardation. In the other, it was reported that few workers with disabilities in supported employment settings were befriended by their co-workers.

These results suggest that although workers with mental retardation are physically integrated in work settings, they do not appear to be socially integrated, especially with their co-workers. In particular, co-workers seem less likely to engage in nonwork interactions with workers with mental retardation. It is conceivable that being involved in fewer nonwork interactions may mean little to job success. However it is likely that nonwork interactions contribute to social support, friendships, and a quality working life.

Clearly, more research is needed that describes the social interactions that occur in work settings. In particular, further work is needed which details the relationship between nonwork interactions, job success, and social integration. As we continue to make strides by helping persons with mental retardation to work in integrated employment settings, we must not be content with mere physical integration. We also must determine if workers make friends, receive social support, and achieve a quality working life because these are benefits that most employees expect and realize.

A copy of the complete article including citations is available from the author. Janice Chadsey-Rusche is Assistant Professor in the Department of Special Education and the Secondary Transition Intervention Effectiveness Institute, University of Illinois,110 Education Building, 1310 S. 6th St., Champaign, IL 61820.

Supported Employment and the Federal Government

by Terrence R. Dolan

During this decade, there have been significant developments in public policy and program innovations involving employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Among these developments is formation of a national strategy to provide employment opportunities to those with the most severe disabilities. This national level leadership has come from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS) in the Department of Education, and the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) in the Office of Human Development Services, Department of Health and Human Services. The efforts of these two agencies have promoted the development of new philosophies, new programs, and new broad-based initiatives.

OSERS Supported Employment Initiative. The OSERS supported employment initiative began in 1985 as a one-time, multi-year, competitive grant program that provided funds to help states convert traditional day activity programs and rehabilitative services to alternative supported employment programs. In 1987, the initiative was expanded significantly when Title VI funds (Part C of the 1986 Amendments to the Rehabilitational Services Administration Act) were made available to states to provide technical assistance and support to develop supported employment programs. The intent of these funds was to establish collaborative/cooperative programs with appropriate public agencies and non-profit private organizations for training and services leading to supported employment. In 1985-86, the original program awarded grants to 27 states totaling approximately $500,000 per state; preliminary estimates suggest that these funds contributed to the development of approximately 20,000 to 30,000 new jobs in the private sector for persons with disabilities. Assessment of the more recent national effort supported by Title VI funds is currently underway.

The ADD's Employment Initiative Campaign. In 1983, in announcing the participation of the United States government in the Decade of the Handicapped, President Reagan assigned partial responsibility for the management of the U.S. effort to the ADD. The Employment Initiative Campaign was developed in 1985 to foster new partnerships between the private and public sectors in the employment of persons with handicapping conditions. In the past three years, numerous corporations in the U.S., as well as other major components of the government, have joined in this broad-based effort. In addition, the Commercial Ministers of Great Britain, Japan, and Brazil have joined the campaign, particularly with respect to their corporate activities occurring in the U.S.

Since 1985, the ADD has awarded 48 grants in the Employment Initiative Campaign, and in 1987 approximately one-half of the ADD annual appropriation for special programs was allocated to employment initiatives. The primary focus of these awards has been the facilitation of the transition of individuals from traditional day programs to competitive employment positions. Many of the funded programs have been awarded to private sector corporations to promote the development of new competitive employment opportunities. A report sponsored by the ADD recently estimated that, as of 1987, 87,000 new jobs had been created in the U.S. for persons with disabilities resulting in approximately $400 million in gross annual taxable wages. In addition, the report estimated that another $400 million had been saved in reductions in public sector support programs.

Supported Employment Research. Although the extensive use of supported employment as a service to persons with developmental disabilities is relatively new in the United States, the many federally and state sponsored initiatives are beginning to provide important data that document the benefits of this service strategy. Evaluations of these supported employment programs are assessing the viability of efforts to convert traditional day activity programs to supported employment programs, the benefits received by the participating individuals with disabilities, the fiscal impact of supported employment programs, factors that influence the success of supported employment programs, benefits to the employers of persons with disabilities, and the advancements in "social perceptions" that this service strategy represents.

The viability of converting day and vocational programs to supported employment programs, the factors that influence the success of these programs, and the benefits that are provided to the individual participants in supported employment programs are still being documented and evaluated. One benefit that is being examined is opportunities for persons with handicapping conditions to work with persons without disabilities in integrated environments; another is the increase in independence skills exhibited by participants in supported employment programs, including communication skills, use of transportation systems, and other skills needed to live in community-based settings. It is anticipated that the research will document that the quality of the participant's life is significantly influenced by his/her role as a wage earner. The wages provide disposable income to the individual who then must engage in all the planning and decision processes that accompany its spending.

The fiscal impact of supported employment programs is difficult to assess, and many considerations must be incorporated into the analysis. Some of the obvious fiscal benefits are related to the savings to society when the participating individuals become taxpayers rather than recipients of the financial support provided to an unemployed person. Another way to assess the benefits/costs of supported employment programs is to compare supported employment costs with the costs associated with

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Update: Minnesota Supported Employment Project

The past several months have been active ones for the Minnesota Supported Employment Project. Highlights include:

• The recently formed Minnesota Alliance for Training and Technical Assistance has been meeting regularly and scheduled its first series of training opportunities. The Alliance includes MARF, MnDACA, MHC, DRS, the Institute on Community Integration, and MnSEP.

• Basic job coach training curriculum materials are currently being developed. It is our intent to finalize the curriculum and pilot the training within the next several months. Parallel activities are aimed at institutionalizing training opportunities for job coaches within state post-secondary education systems in the next 12-18 months.

• Proposals to host community forums on supported employment have been reviewed; the forums allow employers to speak to other employers about the benefits of supported employment. The initial forum in Thief River Falls was held on January 27 and was termed a tremendous success by all participants. Forums will be scheduled in Chisholm, Duluth, Anoka, Sauk Centre, and St. Paul during the next several months. Additional forums may also be scheduled.

• A new Request For Application (RFA) soliciting individual plans for supported employment outcomes for persons with the more severe disabilities is in its final stages of development and should be released shortly. The Project hopes to identify and document outcomes of integrated employment from around Minnesota for persons with the more severe disabilities. The format and structure of the RFA will require collaborative planning at the individual level and will include the availability of technical assistance and help with documentation from the Project.

• The Request for Proposals for Community Conversion Planning Grants is about to be released. A letter announcing the availability of the RFP was sent to interested parties in mid-February. Grants will be awarded for the period beginning September 1.

• Membership on the Project Advisory Committee has been established for 1989. The membership is comprised of representatives of consumer and advocacy groups, private business and labor, county social service agencies, local school districts, rehabilitation facilities, and developmental achievement centers. Work groups are currently focusing on areas such as training/technical assistance, funding, business leadership development, and systems change. Anyone interested in participating on a Project work group should contact us.

• The fifth and final year continuation proposal has been sent to OSERS. It includes anticipated outcomes in the areas of consumer/parent leadership development, local service development, case management, private sector participation, funding, statute and rule, management information systems, and evaluation. Complete copies of the work plan may be obtained from the Project office.

For additional information on Project activities, please contact Ed Boeve or Tom Macy at 612-296-5629 or 1-800-328-9095.

Submitted by Ed Boeve, Minnesota Supported Employment Project Director.

The 11 County Project

Eleven counties in Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Human Services are working cooperatively to develop integrated community services for persons who are presently living in regional treatment centers and who are considered to have complex needs. Six counties in the Twin Cities metro area are developing an ongoing training, technical assistance and crisis intervention support system for providers of residential and day services. This will provide minimal competency training for direct care staff, technical assistance specific to individual needs, onsite intervention and, if neccessary, out-of-home time limited crisis capacity. The remaining five rural counties are receiving training and technical assistance in county planning and development of innovative services to support individuals in their home communities. Training and technical assistance to providers is planned to enhance their capacity to provide support to persons in ways that may differ from traditional services. Information on successful strategies, barriers to integrated community services, and recommended changes will be made available from the project.

For more information on the Eleven County Project contact Alex Henry, Project Coordinator, Department of Human Services, Division for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, 444 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-3825,(612)296-0939.

Submitted by Alex Henry.

State Offers SE Joint Training

To facilitate local coordination of supported employment services, the Departments of Human Services and Jobs and Training are offering 10 one-day training sessions throughout Minnesota targeted for county case managers, mental health providers, and Division for Rehabilitation Services (DRS) counselors. Content of the training includes: an explanation of how supported employment specifically affects each service planning system of mental health, developmental disabilities, and vocational rehabilitation; a description of the funding process, including collaborative agreements and other community planning activities; strategies for securing and evaluating quality services; and ideas for managing change. A manual covering these areas will be provided at the sessions.

A brochure is being mailed to county case managers, mental health providers, and DRS counselors with additional details. For further information call Ed Boeve, Minnesota Supported Employment Project, at (612)296-5629.

CTICs Impact Supported Employment

In 1987, Minnesota passed M.S. 120.17, sub. 16., mandating the initiation of Community Transition Interagency Committees (CTICs). These committees are viewed as a major vehicle for change in the array of educational and adult services available to youth with disabilities across the state. Students with severe disabilities are beginning to receive extensive vocational training during their school years and expect to be employed with support in regular community business as adults. Even an excellent secondary program with good adult service alternatives available cannot benefit people with disabilities without planning and coordination of services. Ongoing support requires long-term planning by several adult agencies along with schools. This changes the traditional roles of adult services, as well as the programming emphasis of traditional adult vocational/habilitation services.

Through the efforts of local CTICs, agencies are now learning about the activities of schools, and planning for supported employment options for students with disaiblities is beginning to take place. Committees are looking at what exists in their communities, why they feel a need for change, what they are doing to address their needs, and what they hope to achieve over the next several years. Minnesota committes are addressing the following areas that impact supported employment:

• The sequence of evaluation, training, and support: Agencies are learning to collaborate on the collection of this information and schools are more efficiently collecting the kinds of information adult services need.

• Anticipation of services: Through interagency planning, information about the future support needs of individuals can be passed to necessary parties long before graduation, so that planning for upcoming graduates can take place and students can avoid waiting lists or an absence of appropriate services.

• Expansion of supported employment to citizens with disabilities other than mental retardation, i.e. severe physical handicaps or mental illness: Through participation on CTIC committees, advocates for these disability groups can learn more about supported employment and enter into agreements for the benefit of a broad spectrum of people.

• Opportunities for cooperative programming with other public agencies and the private sector: Redirection of existing resources and utilization of supplementary funding and programming options can make services available that no one agency on its own has the resources to provide.

At this point in their development, most CTIC activity appears to concentrate on providing information about community adult services, offering community-based opportunities for students, encouraging coordination between adult service providers and education, extending invitations to adult service providers and education, and extending invitations to adult service providers to attend student IEP meetings.

The number of persons sharing in the process of local cooperative actions is now in the hundreds, and many individuals and organizations previously uninvolved in planning sessions with human service professionals are now actively involved in meetings. Most importantly, the many challenges that lie ahead in improving transition services for youth with disabilities are being systematically addressed in Minnesota.

Submitted by Sandy Thompson, CTIC Technical Assistance Project Coordinator with the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota.

Alliance Offers New Training/Assistance Options

The newly formed Minnesota Alliance for Training and Technical Assistance is a collaborative project of several agencies and organizations that have joined forces to gain consensus on the current, most critical needs facing supported employment providers across Minnesota. In the short span of a few months, this group has developed a series of conferences entitled SERIES I and SERIES II that are addressing important supported employment issues in significantly new ways. Many of the conferences offer "train-the-trainer" workshops in which selected trainers have the unique opportunity to be taught firsthand by recognized national leaders in the content area being addressed. In addition, participants are asked to complete a strategic action plan to guide the implementation of new knowledge into practice after they return to their local programs. The action plans also allow agencies to request technical assistance in making those anticipated changes a reality.

For information on upcoming SERIES II events, contact Ron Erickson at the Technical Assistance Resource Network, (612) 624-0232.

The Minnesota Alliance for Training and Technical Assistance is comprised of representatives from the Minnesota Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, the Minnesota Developmental Achievement Center Association, the Minnesota Division of Rehabilitation Services, the Minnesota Habilitation Coalition, the Institute on Community Integration, and the Minnesota Supported Employment Project.

Submitted by Ron Erickson, MNTARN Project Coordinator with the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota.

Resources on Supported Employment

- The Employment Network Project - University of Oregon (compiled by). **Partial List of Videos about Supported Employment**. This national listing includes 58 videos about supported employment, and gives title, length, target audience, comments, source/address and purchase/rental fee for each. Source: Minnesota Technical Assistance Resource Network on Supported Employment (MNTARN), 6 Pattee Hall, University of Minnesota, 150 Pillsbury Dr. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455.

- McLaughlin, C.S., Garner, J.B., & Callahan, M. (1987). **Getting Employed, Staying Employed - Job Development and Training for Persons with Severe Handicaps.** Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. This is a practical, "how to" book that identifies specific strategies for securing employment for persons with developmental disabilities. The book has three main sections: the first describes current service models for training and employment; the second highlights a step-by-step approach to job development; and the third details employment training (job analysis, training and assessment, increasing production rates). The book is clearly written with a functional approach to job development and employment training.

- Wehman, P., & Moon, M.S. (1988). **Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment.** Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. This book focuses specifically on supported employment and vocational rehabilitation. The first two sections address general issues related to supported employment; Section III looks at how community-based programs are responding to the supported employment challenge; Section IV examines the roles of business and government; and Section V addresses the needs of persons with various disabling conditions.

- PACER Center/Supported Employment Parent Training Technical Assistance (SEPT/TA) Project (August, 1988). **A Reference Manual for Parent Training About Supported Employment.** The reference manual includes an annotated bibliography of professional journal articles, unpublished manuscripts, books, audiovisual materials, and a list of parent training groups. Source: Cici Shapland or Sharman Davis Jamison, PACER Center, Minneapolis, (612) 827-2966.

- The Employment Network-University of Oregon (compiled by). **Bibliography of Supported Employment Materials**. Final version copies will be available Spring, 1989. Contact: Andrea Cioffi at the Employment Network, University of Oregon, 135 Education Building, Eugene, Oregon 97403 at (503) 686-5311.

- Rusch, Frank R. (Ed.) (1986). **Competitive Employment Issues and Strategies. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co**. A reference on the development of non-sheltered employment options for persons with disabilities, with emphasis on the supported work model. This book includes discussion of model programs, methodologies and competitive employment issues.

- Bellamy, T.G., Rhodes, P.E., Mank, D.M., Albin, J.M. (1988). **Supported Employment - A Community Implementation Guide.** Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. This book describes the needs of each party involved in the development and maintenance of supported employment programs: local service providers, parents, professional staff, public administering agencies, teachers, and employers. It also includes practical advice on implementing supported employment programs.

Wehman, continued from p. 7

addition, training techniques need to be more precise and structured than many employment specialists currently have the skill to perform. Another problem is that the expectations of many professionals and parents are quite low. If an employment specialist does not expect a person to succeed, then he or she probably won't make it!

Are the costs of implementing a supported employment program for individuals with severe handicaps about the same as for those with mild or moderate disabilities?

The costs are usually higher than the costs for persons with mild or moderate disabilities. Research with clients at the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, Virginia Commonwealth University, over a 10-year period shows that persons with mild and moderate handicaps could be placed and retained for about $3,000 initially. Preliminary research results from recent demonstrations at the RRTC and other places as well show that the average range of costs is quite wide, with a range of $4,500 to $14,000 per placement. While it is too early to clearly determine the long range average costs, it would appear that $6,000 to $7,000 approximates what service providers should expect. As job coaches become more competent in training persons with severe handicaps, this figure will drop.

(Taken from **"Supported Competitive Employment for Individuals with Severe Handicaps"**, a joint publication from the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center and the Supported Employment Project for Youth with Severe Handicaps, Virginia Commonwealth University, Fall, 1988.)

Paul Wehman is Director of the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia. Katherine J. Inge is Coordinator of the Supported Employment Project for Youth with Severe Disabilities at the Center.

Upcoming Events

March 30-31: Community Economic Development and Rehabilitation Facilities seminar, Denver. For information contact Dale Verstegen, Wisconsin Department of Development, 123 Washington Avenue, P.O. Box 7970, Madison, WI 53707. (608) 266-5557.

April 10-12: National Supported Employment Parent Training Technical Assistance (SEPT/TA) Conference, Arlington, Virginia. For information contact SEPT/TA at (612) 827-2966.

April 12-14: 5th Annual National Symposium on Supported Employment--"Making Supported Employment Work at All Levels: National, State, Local and Individual", Virginia Beach, Virginia. For information contact Virginia Commonwealth University, RRTC, 1314 W. Main Street, VCU Box 2011, Richmond, Virginia 23284-2011.

April 12-14: 10th Annual International Conference - "Ensuring Quality of Life From Infancy Through Adulthood: Policy and Program Implications for Government, Consumers and Professionals", New York City. For information contact Young Adult Institute, 460 W. 34th St., New York, NY 10001-2382. (212) 563-7474.

April 18-21: Analysis of Individual Support Strategies seminar, New York City. For information contact Jay Buckley or Andrea Cioffi, The Employment Network, University of Oregon, 135 Education Building, Eugene, Oregon 97403. (503)686-5311.

April 25: Transition workshop for parents, Marshall, Minnesota. For information contact PACER, 4826 Chicago Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55417-1055. (612)827-2966.

May 4: Supported employment workshop for parents, Moorhead, Minnesota. For information contact PACER, (see April 25th event for address/phone).

May 15: Transition workshop for parents, Thief River Falls, Minesota. For information contact PACER (see April 25th event for address/phone).

June: Forum on Issues in Supported Employment, Washington, D.C. For information contact Jay Buckley or Andrea Cioffi, The Employment Network, University of Oregon, 135 Education Building, Eugene, Oregon, 97403. (503)686-5311.

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traditional day and vocational services. Although such analyses have not yet been completed on a broad scale, OSERS has reported preliminary data that suggest that the average costs of supported employment programs may not be significantly different than the average costs associated with traditional service programs. Several other analyses are also being conducted at the present time and preliminary results are being published (e.g., see Noble and Conley, JASH, 1988).

Several recent surveys of employers of persons with disabilities have indicated significant and long-term benefits. These surveys have indicated, for example, that persons with disabilities constitute a segment of the work force characterized by stability, low-turnover rates, competency, and highly reliable daily attendance. These characteristics persisted even for employees in positions often noted for their high turnover rates.

Finally, some studies have suggested that an important benefit of the supported employment strategy is the change in social perceptions of the society with respect to persons with disabilities. These studies suggest that the societal perceptions of a person with a disability emphasize not only the vocational and economic aspects of participation in a supported employment program, but the social dimensions as well. Participation in a supported employment program contributes to the role of a person with a disability as an active and contributing member of the society.

Conclusions. In summary, both the OSERS and ADD, and many other federal and state programs in the United States, are committed to the philosophy that persons with developmental disabilities should have the opportunity to work and live in community settings. Although there is still much to learn about supported employment, and other strategies may be developed that prove effective, the preliminary results on supported employment as a service alternative are most promising. These analyses suggest that supported employment provides the opportunity for even persons with severe disabilities to be employed in regular, competitive work settings. The assessments also suggest that supported employment programs are fiscally sound with significant benefits, both direct and indirect, to the participating individuals, the employers, and the society in which they reside.

Terrence Dolan is Professor of Neurophysiology and Director of the Waisman Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

IMPACT

Feature Issue on Supported Employment
Spring 1989

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The mission of the Institute is to apply its resources to improve the quality and community orientation of professional services and social supports available to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Institute efforts are directed at facilitating the independence and social integration of citizens with developmental disabilities into the mainstream of community life. Inquires about the Institute or ***Impact*** can be directed to:

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6 Pattee Hall, University of Minnesota,
150 Pillsbury Drive SE,
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455,
(612)624-4848.

We've Changed...

The Minnesota University Affiliated Program on Developmental Disabilities has changed its name to Institute on Community Integration. The new name will, we hope, more clearly reflect our continued commitment to improving community services and social support for persons with developmental disabilities and their families.

In upcoming issues of IMPACT ...

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